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TAGS: [AGR](#) [FAO](#) [FAS](#) [IFAD](#) [BL](#)  
SUBJECT: REQUEST OF WHEAT AID FOR BOLIVIA

11. (U) THIS IS AN ACTION REQUEST.

12. (U) Bolivia is currently experiencing a serious shortage of wheat. It is the result of public and private mismanagement, faulty Argentinean supplies, and world-wide shortages. Donated wheat has been a fundamental part of Bolivian supply under both the Title I and II programs. Title I government-to-government donations have stopped and Title II programs are set to close down at the end of 2008. In December of 2007, Minister of Agriculture Susana Rivero took the extreme step of refusing a shipment of 6,000 tons of wheat destined to support Title II programs. The motives of this move are unclear, but when news of the refusal became public in March, the government took a heavy public relations hit. In January 2008, Graciela Toro was named the new Minister of Planning. In a March meeting with the Ambassador, Toro, who is more receptive to U.S./Bolivian cooperation, made a request for an additional wheat donation. Given the recent announcements from the White House regarding additional food aid and the opening of the Emerson Trust, Post would like to request that Bolivia be considered for an emergency shipment of unprocessed wheat. The donation would be consistent with our policy of engagement and support for the Bolivian people.

13. (SBU) A donation may have the additional benefit of helping maintain U.S. markets. In an April meeting, Miguel Galdos, from the U.S. Wheat Associates office in Santiago, told us that millers in La Paz were close to going out of business because of a shortage of unprocessed wheat in the country. He feared that without these millers, Bolivia would rely solely on milled Argentinean wheat imports and U.S. producers would be shut out of a long-standing market for their products.

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